

**California Department of Conservation
Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program**

2000 FIELD REPORT

COUNTY: Tulare

FIELD MAPPER(S): Patrick Hennessy

PHOTOGRAPHY:

source: NASA-Ames
date: September 14, 1999
scale: 1 :130,000
film type: CIR Transparency
coverage gaps: Far eastern portion of survey area

WRITTEN OR ORAL INFORMATION SOURCES: *Please list which local governments, interest groups, or individuals submitted comments on the 1998 maps. Also list all phone and in-person contacts made while conducting the 2000 update.*

➤ *local review comments*

cities: Porterville, Lindsay, Farmersville
county:
others:

➤ *personal contacts:* none

1998-2000 CHANGES*: *Please summarize the most common changes to the maps. List representative locations (quads) of each type of change encountered. Make sure to list and describe particularly large, unusual or notable changes and give estimates of the acreage involved.*

Note that the 2000 map update included extensive work to gather more detail on agricultural land use due to the availability of the new Western Tulare soil survey. Both the western area, and the existing eastern side, have digital (GIS) soil data, thus a number of additional land use categories are discussed in this field report. These additional categories will not be evident on the final Important Farmland map or GIS file, but are used within the FMMP analytic process to determine qualification of lands for Farmland of Local Importance and Unique Farmland. Please see the end of this document for a list of these categories.

➤ P, S, U, I → D

A total of 46 changes from irrigated farmland to urban land. Most of these changes occurred on the Visalia quad (22) including new homes and office buildings. The Tulare quad had 5 changes to urban land.

➤ L, G, X, N → D

Non-irrigated land had 16 changes to urban land. Most of the changes are well spread throughout the county. The Lindsay quad had 4 changes while Porterville and Success Dam quads both had 3 changes.

➤ P, S, U, I → L, G, nG, nT

This type of change was very important for the 2000 update. The county experienced 156 changes from irrigated farmland to local farmland, grazing land, dry grains, and non-irrigated trees. There were many fields that have been fallow for 3 updates and they were finally downgraded. The occurrence of this change is spread evenly throughout the county, but a few areas had higher amounts. The Exeter quad has 16, Tulare has 13, and Ducor has 12 changes. Even though this change isn't the most numerous, it is a very significant one because most of the irrigated farmland was changed to Local farmland after being fallow. A large amount of land was taken out of use.

➤ P, S, U, I → X

There are 28 changes from irrigated farmland to other land. Most of the changes are low-density residential ranches widely dispersed. The Visalia quad has 4 such changes, and the Exeter quad just to the east has 3 changes.

➤ P, S, U, I → CI, iP, nu

Irrigated farmland changing to confined livestock, irrigated pasture, and nursery was enormous during this update. A grand total of 235 changes occurred. This type of change is in preparation for replacing the interim farmland categories with the important farmland categories in the western part of Tulare County. Most of the changes are irrigated farmland to irrigated pasture. This identification was facilitated by the 1999 DWR land use survey. Irrigated pasture can be easily misinterpreted as irrigated farmland without site truthing. Several feedlots have expanded their operations and line adjustments had to be made, converting irrigated farmland to CI. These new categories may potentially fall into a local definition for the entire survey area, so the separation was done now with the regular update. The Woodlake quad has 21 changes, Monson and Taylor Weir have 20 changes each. The Exeter quad has 17, and Paige, Tulare, Tipton, and Porterville have 14 changes each. Like the other changes, these are wide spread throughout the county.

➤ L, G, X, N → P, S, U, I

New irrigated farmland contributed 63 changes. The most active quads for this change include Woodlake with 11, Lindsay with 8, and Porterville with 6. New types of crops include citrus and olive trees, particularly in the foothill regions.

➤ L, G, X → CI, iP, nu

This change is very big. There are 342 total changes. The most common one is the change from X and L to CI. In the Interim area, feedlots are mapped as X, and in the important farmland area, feedlots fall within the definition of local farmland mapped as L. In preparation for the incorporation of the new soil survey, the confined livestock (CI) is being identified beforehand in both the interim and important farmland areas. Similarly, irrigated pasture is mapped as L in the important farmland area and the identification involves a

change from L to iP. The irrigated pasture is easily overlooked because it resembles irrigated farmland. This was previously mentioned as part of the abundance of P, S, U, I to iP changes. The changes to nu are from line adjustments or expansions of existing nurseries. The busiest quads are Paige (43), Tipton (39), Taylor Weir (31), Cairns Corner (28), Goshen (27), and Tulare (26).

➤ L, G, X, N → nG

Some areas have been identified as dry grain farming in preparation for incorporating the digital soils data. There are 24 of these changes, and most of them are very large in area. The extreme southeast corner of the survey area is heavily used for dry grain farming and experienced all of the changes. The 1999 DWR land use survey was also very useful for identifying the dry grain areas from the native vegetation and grazing land.

➤ P, S, U, I → nG

A couple of irrigated fields have been converted to dry grain farming (18). These fields went 3 updates flagged as dry grain supporting the change. Some of the changes are easily interpreted from the photos, but others were field checked and still others were verified with the help of the DWR survey. Ducor has 11 of these changes, Richgrove has 5 and Porterville has 2. These quads are also in the southeast portion of the survey area.

➤ **UNUSUAL:** *Category changes, complications with the Farmland of Local Importance definition, or any other special circumstances in 2000.*

➤ D → I

There was a nursery mapped as D with plants in the soil, so it was changed to I.

➤ X → W, P, S

Land next to Bravo Lake on the Woodlake quad was flooded in the 97 and 99 photos, and consequently changed to W. A portion of this same X was now being farmed and therefore changed to P and S.

➤ P, S, I, G, X → nG

This is the very large dry grain area near Porterville. It is unusual because of the size and complexity of the change. The dry grain area south of Porterville is also unusual, and even bigger, ranging in the hundreds of acres.

➤ X → D

This is an evaporation pond on the Alpaugh quad that was filled with water. Water control structures such as these should be mapped as D.

PROBLEM AREAS: *What locations and map categories need careful checking in 2002? Why?*

The southern portion of the county needs special attention. The southwest area is very arid and irrigated crops don't look as healthy in that region. Cotton seems to be a common crop there. In the southeast portion of the county, dry grains dominate the land use. Occasionally, there will be irrigated plots of land interspersed among the dry grains.

Conversions between irrigated and non-irrigated crops will probably occur frequently in this region.

OUT OF DATE BASE MAPS: *Please list any base maps used for update or publication of this county which are woefully out of date due to extensive new development, road construction, etc.*

None

LABOR ESTIMATE: *Please estimate the amount of time spent on the following tasks.*

photo interpretation, start date: June 2001
photo interpretation, number of days: 3 months
ground truthing dates: Aug. 7-10 2001
days for map compilation and clean up: 1 month

- **Important Farmland categories:** P = Prime Farmland; S = Farmland of Statewide Importance; U = Unique Farmland; L = Farmland of Local Importance; G = Grazing Land; D = Urban and Built-up Land; X = Other Land; W = Water Areas
- **Special analytic categories:** I = Irrigated Farmland; N = Nonirrigated Farmland; nG = Nonirrigated grain; nT = Nonirrigated trees or vines; iP = Irrigated Pasture; nu = nurseries; Cl = Confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities

Further information on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program can be found at:

www.consrv.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp